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POL PB6

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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

() Release (X) Excise () Deny

Exemption(s): 56

Declassify: () In Part () In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

Pinto

Brazilian

B6

20 May 1976

Frank V. Ortiz Jr.
Director for Argentina, Paraguay,
and Uruguay Affairs
U.S. State Department
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Ortiz:

I am writing in concern for the fate of refugees, particularly from Chile, who are living in Argentina.

General Videla's statement (quoted in the New York Times) in his inaugural address that "For us, respect for human rights is based not on legal mandates or international declarations, but is a result of our profound Christian convictions on the pre-eminent dignity of man as a fundamental value" was indeed heartening. However, events in Argentina since the coup of March 24 have not been consistent with this statement. I wish to bring to your attention two incidents in particular:

- 1) One day after the coup, on March 25, Argentine police raided the home of Mario Munoz Salas, a Chilean living in Buenos Aires. Sr. Munoz was not found. His children and wife, however, were treated brutally by the police, who told Sra. Munoz that if found her husband would be shot on sight.
- 2) Eleven days after the coup, on April 10, Edgardo Enriquez Espinosa, a Chilean engineer who had been living in Argentina since late in 1973, and his Brazilian acquaintance Regina Barcoide both disappeared after separately leaving Sr. Enriquez's home in Buenos Aires and to my knowledge have not been seen again.

The lives of these two Chilean men and this Brazilian woman appear to be in immediate danger; certainly their rights have not been observed.

Moreover, at this juncture the Argentine government's policy concerning expulsion or repatriation of refugees does not seem altogether clear, although its March 26 Communique #44 provides for expulsion of foreigners, even those who are permanent residents of Argentina, on several new grounds. In view of this, it would appear that numerous refugees who have fled persecution in other South American countries are in danger of being returned from Argentina to their countries of origin. Two Uruguayans have in fact been forcibly returned to Uruguay. Although some Chileans have obtained visas to travel to Europe, of particular concern is the fate of ten Chilean prisoners in Argentina (listed below) who are in danger under the stipulations of Communique

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#44 of being turned over to the Chilean police:

~~Cravo Moreno, Luis~~
~~Gustos Ramirez, Juan Jose~~
~~Letelier Sotomayor, Sergio~~
~~Munoz Martinez, Sergio~~
~~Palma Herrera, Catalina~~
~~Pizarro Hofer, Roberto~~
~~Avilan de Pizarro, Guillermina Alicia (Pizarro's wife)~~
~~Rejovitzky, Ernesto Bernardo~~
~~Salinas Alvarez, Gabriel~~
~~Zavala San Martin, Ximena~~

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May I request that the appropriate official of the State Department give his immediate attention to the twelve Chileans mentioned above since their well-being and perhaps their lives may be in danger?

Respectfully yours,

[Signature Box]

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cc: Robert Driscoll
Chief, Chilean Political Affairs
U.S. State Department

Robert C Hill
U.S. Ambassador to Argentina

David M. Potter
U.S. Ambassador to Chile

Christopher Dodd
U.S. House of Representatives